

EDI Workshop March 3, 2023
Department of Anthropology, Lakehead University

What are some concrete steps our department could take towards justice in research, teaching, and service? Organize the steps into themes/categories.

Group responses and categories/themes:

Group A:

Positionality, Reflexivity, and Mentorship

- Collective expectation setting for group interactions (research group, classes, etc.)
- Help to connect “non-traditional” students with mentors who share similar lived experiences
- Create ways for students to share their experiences in the department anonymously (particularly for negative experiences)
- Support the most vulnerable members of your department
- Recognize one’s subject position in power relations

Education

- Include diversity in readings list
- Diversify course readings lists to centre historically marginalized voices
- Have a way to share resources on EDI and justice
- Get together to discuss EDI and justice
- Hold workshops and host speakers who are from equity-seeking groups
- Make a map together
- Identify language of exclusion and inclusion

Engage with Local Stakeholders

- Recognize local history of oppression in classroom teaching
- Invite local FN to engage with collections
- Pay attention! Don’t ignore things just because it is easy
- Know what your colleagues are teaching/researching
- Ask each faculty member to write a diversity statement

Group B:

Social & Networking

- Increased emphasis on group versus individual (i.e., lab groups for grad students)
- Beer Fridays - social interaction to find out what everyone is up to and who is involved with what
- More workshops, labs, and field experiences in classes (more social interaction/networking opportunities)
- Diversifying methods of measuring metrics in classes

Other:

- No money! Need funding to create opportunities for socialization
- Diversify methods of measuring metrics/marks in classes

Equity

- Job security for contract employees? (Techs, contract lecturers, PDFs, grad student support).
- “Lecturer” positions if not tenured
- More job opportunities for students (not just volunteer)
- Equal opportunities for research initiatives and career development
- More opportunities for Indigenous inclusion from the beginning of project (and department programs)
- More value and applied research, mentoring, and other services to the department, not just peer-reviewed publications
- Mandate of LU is northern → but not valued actually
- Keep cultural heritage local (i.e., repository of information/ Not Toronto)
- Value Northern Ontario archaeology and anthropology - who else will do it? Laurentian closing means we are the only university here
- Archaeology- perception- is there any work?
- Apply what you preach - ability to pursue community engagement with support of the university - time and funding
- We need to do more work o building anthropology into Ontario curriculum (social science) to build our disciplines

Group C

Discussions

- Discuss our individual and departmental responsibilities related to UNDRIP
- Small steps
 - Build on small accomplishments
 - Fix the worst thing – priority things, one thing at a time
 - What if we tried to make a list of all the biggest barriers our department projects to prospective students, and then try to rectify the worst ones?
- Listen to each other
- Learn what other departments have done to build relationships for joint collections management (or at least taking care of ancestors)
- Sharing our individual EDI/justice related strategies with each other (faculty)
- Increase representation of under-represented groups in as many ways as possible (e.g., classes, majors, grad students, faculty)
- Identify specific end goals and make a plan(s)

Approaches to Research and Teaching

- Survey/discussion at the beginning of each course to discuss the needs of students and what is to be expected in the class/Zoom environment → safe space
- As a “privileged” senior faculty member, perhaps most important thing I can do is to listen and critically reflect on how/if I contribute to the problem...

- As a researcher, I need to focus on what people/communities want researched, rather than act upon what I think would be of service
- Educate the undergrads or any level the definition/level of privilege, racism, sexism exists on so people recognize the insidious, systemic nature of them rather than focus on themselves

Outreach

- Targeted outreach or partnerships with Indigenous high school/post-secondary education (at LU, Indigenous Affairs, Dennis Cromarty High School, etc.)
- Superior Science style thing (summer outreach for high school/elementary) but for Anthropology or Archaeology – would require more funding?
- Interactive tours of the labs (if possible)
- Discussing the (untold?) history of Thunder Bay with the public
- Discussing the faculty's projects with the public
- Outreach directed towards high school students - assembly style?
- Extending Anthropology activities (atl atl demonstration, flint knapping) to those outside of anthropology → offer to high school students (maybe not the atl atl throwing)